



U.S. Department of Homeland Security Bureau of Customs and Border Protection

PUBLIC JOB NOTICE

BORDER PATROL AGENT

GS-1896-05 and 07 (Full Performance Level GS-11)

Announcement No: BPA-03-1 (Amended)

Opening Date: October 1, 2002

Closing Date: September 30, 2003 at Midnight Eastern Time

Number of Vacancies: Many

Salary: GS-05 ranges from \$31,690 to \$34,029
GS-07 ranges from \$36,075 to \$38,737

Location of Positions: California, Arizona, New Mexico/West Texas, and South Texas

HOW TO APPLY: You must register for the written test for the Border Patrol Agent position during the open period (10/1/02 – 9/30/03). You may register for the written test online via the Internet at <http://staffing.opm.gov/BPA/>. You may also register for the written test by telephone via the Telephone Application Processing System (TAPS), at 1-888-300-5500. When asked for the marketing code, enter 9964. Both the web-site address and TAPS lines are available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week during the open period. Based on your responses to the questions asked, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will determine if you meet the basic qualifications for the position. If you meet these basic qualifications, OPM will schedule you for the written test.

Please Note: If you took the Border Patrol Agent examination within the last twelve months and received an eligible rating, your test results are still valid and you are not allowed to apply during this open period.

If you took the Border Patrol Agent examination and received an ineligible rating, you must wait six months from the date on your Notice of Results (test score results) before you can register for the Border Patrol examination.

For more information on the Border Patrol, visit our web site at www.usborderpatrol.gov. You may also call 1-800-238-1945 to hear pre-recorded information on the Border Patrol Agent occupation.

UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL: The U.S. Border Patrol was officially established on July 1, 1924, under the authority of the Immigration Act approved by Congress on May 28, 1924. Effective March 1, 2003, the Border Patrol, previously one of the uniformed arms of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) under the Department of Justice, became a part of the newly established Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Border Patrol is now joined with Immigration Inspectors, formerly part of the INS, and their U.S. Customs and Department of Agriculture partners under the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (BCBP).

From its inception in 1924, the Border Patrol has earned and enjoyed one of the highest reputations among law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. Border Patrol Agents are traditionally known for their

intense loyalty and fine esprit de corps. While the mission under the DHS has broadened the scope of the Border Patrol to work in tandem with its border protection partners to fight the threat of terrorism, the primary focus of the Border Patrol remains unchanged---to detect and prevent the smuggling and unlawful entry of undocumented aliens into the United States and to apprehend those persons found in the United States in violation of the Immigration laws. With the increase in drug smuggling operations, the Border Patrol is the primary drug-interdicting agency along the land borders, between all the United States land ports of entry.

One of the most important activities of a Border Patrol Agent is line-watch. This involves the detection, prevention, and apprehension of undocumented aliens and smugglers of aliens at or near the land border by maintaining surveillance from a covert position, following up leads, responding to electronic sensor alarms, infrared scopes during night operations, low light level television systems, aircraft sightings, and interpreting and following tracks, marks, and other physical evidence. Some of the other major activities are farm and ranch check, traffic check, traffic observation, city patrol, transportation check, administrative, intelligence, and anti-smuggling activities.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

NOTE: You may qualify for the Border Patrol Agent position based on education, experience, or a combination of both. Please carefully review the qualification requirements for the grade GS-5 and the grade GS-7 Border Patrol Agent position listed below. If, after reviewing the following qualifications it appears that you qualify for the higher grade (GS-7), you may also apply for the lower grade (GS-5). Applicants will only be considered for the grade(s) at which they apply and for which they qualify.

Qualifying at the GS-5 Level: Applicants must have a substantial background of work experience of which at least one year must have been comparable in level of difficulty and responsibility to grade GS-4 in the Federal service. This type of experience must demonstrate an ability to take charge, make sound decisions, and maintain composure in stressful situations; it must demonstrate the ability to learn law enforcement regulations, methods, and techniques through classroom training and/or on-the-job instruction; and it must demonstrate the ability to gather factual information through questioning, observation, and examination of documents and records.

OR

If applicants do not have the work experience described above, a 4-year college degree can be substituted for, and is fully qualifying for, the GS-5 level. There is no requirement that the degree is in any particular field or that it is a recent degree. Education obtained from a foreign university or college is not creditable for qualifications requirements unless it has been evaluated (see <http://www.naces.org/members.htm> for a list of organizations that evaluate education).

OR

Applicants may qualify through a combination of education and work experience. Each year of full-time college (semester or quarter units) equates to three months of general work experience. For example, two (2) years of full-time college education, equates to six months of experience. With an additional six (6) months of general work experience, a candidate could qualify for the GS-5 position.

Qualifying at the GS-7 Level: It is extremely important that you be able to provide the documentation described below to be considered for a grade GS-7 if you claim that you are qualified during the registration process at the GS-7 level. If you are tentatively selected at that grade, you will be required to provide evidence that you meet the requirements described below. Candidate's grade level will be determined based on the information provided in the application. If a candidate is offered a position as a Border Patrol Agent (Trainee), GS-5, and accepts it, their grade level cannot be changed once they have entered on duty. A candidate's application (Resume, OF 612, or SF-171) must completely and specifically describe all job duties that are to be

considered in the determination. Official transcripts must come from the Registrar's office. Failure to provide this documentation will result in not being found qualified at the GS-7 grade level.

One (1) year of LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPERIENCE comparable in level of difficulty and responsibility to GS-5 may qualify for the GS-7 level. Experience **must have demonstrated the ability to do all four of the following:**

- a) Make arrests and exercise sound judgment in the use of firearms;
- b) Deal effectively with individuals or groups of persons in a courteous, tactful manner in connection with law enforcement matters;
- c) Analyze information rapidly and make prompt decisions or take prompt and appropriate law enforcement action in light of applicable laws, court decisions, and sound law enforcement matters;
- d) Develop and maintain contact with a network of informants.

All four items listed above must be met in order to qualify at the GS-7 grade level based on experience. These four items must be addressed in the application/resume.

OR

One (1) full year of graduate education in law or a field related to law enforcement (e.g. Criminal Justice, police science) can qualify for the GS-07 level.

OR

Applicants may qualify through a combination of graduate education and specialized experience. To determine your percentage of qualifying specialized experience, you must divide your total number of months of qualifying experience by 12. To calculate your percentage of graduate education, divide the number of graduate semester hours by 18 or graduate quarter hours by 27. Add your percentage of graduate education and experience together, the two percentages must total at least 100% for you to qualify under the combination of specialized experience and graduate education.

OR

Superior Academic Achievement (SAA): to qualify for the GS-7 grade under the SAA provision, candidates must have a Bachelor's degree from an accredited year college/university. SAA is based on: (1) grade point average (GPA) (grade point average of 3.0 or higher out of a possible 4.0 for all completed undergraduate courses, or courses completed in the last 2 years of undergraduate study; or a GPA of 3.5 or higher out of a possible 4.0 for all courses in major field of study, or required courses in major completed in the last 2 years of undergraduate study; (2) class standing (applicants must be in the upper third of their graduating class in their college, university, or major subdivision); or (3) honor society membership (applicants must have been a member of a national scholastic honor society other than freshmen honor societies).

Applicants usually cannot claim credit based on their overall GPA if more than 10 percent of their total credit was based on pass/fail or similar systems rather than on traditional grading systems. If it can be documented that only freshman-year courses (25 percent or less of their total credit) were credited on a pass/fail or similar system, they can use their overall GPA to claim SAA. If 10 percent or fewer credits or only freshman-year courses were based on pass/fail or similar systems, such credits can be ignored and the GPA computed on the graded courses. Applicants can, however, still claim credit based on their last 2 years if 10 percent or fewer credits were based on pass/fail or similar systems. Applicants who cannot claim credit under the GPA requirements may claim credit for SAA only on the basis of class standing or honor society membership.

For additional information on SAA, you can either go to the web-site www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e5.htm or if you have a touch-tone telephone and have access to a fax machine, you can call INSFAX, a faxback system, at 612-727-5290, and request document number 40035 be faxed to you.

Written Test: You must pass a written test. The written test consists of general abilities and language testing. (Since Border Patrol Agents must speak and read Spanish, applicants are required to take either an artificial language test designed to predict ability to learn a foreign language, or a Spanish proficiency test designed to test their Spanish language ability.) Applicants will be tested on a regular basis in the order in which they apply. Applicants who pass the test will be eligible for consideration in the order in which they are tested.

Basis of Rating: Applicants must score 70, exclusive of veterans preference points, on the written test and meet the education and/or experience requirements specified in this announcement.

Oral Interview: As part of the basic qualifications determination, candidates must appear before an oral interview panel and demonstrate that they possess the abilities and other characteristics important to Border Patrol Agent positions. Among these are judgment/decision-making, emotional maturity, interpersonal skills, and cooperativeness/sensitivity to the needs of others competencies. Interview will be rated on a pass/fail basis. Candidates must receive a “pass” in all areas in order to continue in the hiring process. Applicants may select an interview location closest to where they currently live. During the registration process for the written test, applicants will be asked to identify the city code where they would like to take the structured oral interview from the following choices:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 200 - Alabama, Mobile | 230 - New York, Albany |
| 202 - Arkansas, North Little Rock | 231 - New York, Champlain |
| 203 - Arizona, Tucson | 232 - New York, New York City |
| 204 - Arizona, Yuma | 233 - New York, Tonawanda |
| 207 - California, Dublin | 234 - North Dakota, Grand Forks |
| 259 - California, Fresno | 236 - Ohio, Cleveland |
| 260 - California, San Diego | 238 - Oregon, Portland |
| 208 - Colorado, Denver | 239 - Pennsylvania, York |
| 209 - Florida, Orlando | 240 - Puerto Rico, Ramey |
| 210 - Florida, Pembroke Pines | 241 - South Carolina, North Charleston
(Academy) |
| 211 - Georgia, Atlanta | 242 - Tennessee, Nashville |
| 213 - Hawaii, Honolulu | 244 - Texas, Dallas |
| 214 - Idaho, Twin Falls | 245 - Texas, Del Rio |
| 261 - Illinois, Chicago | 246 - Texas, El Paso |
| 216 - Indiana, Indianapolis | 264 - Texas, Harlingen |
| 218 - Louisiana, Baton Rouge | 247 - Texas, Houston |
| 262 - Maine, Houlton | 248 - Texas, Laredo |
| 221 - Massachusetts, Boston | 263 - Texas, Lubbock |
| 222 - Michigan, Detroit | 249 - Texas, Marfa |
| 224 - Minnesota, Fort Snelling (Minneapolis/
St. Paul) | 267 - Texas, San Antonio |
| 225 - Missouri, Kansas City | 265 - Vermont, Swanton |
| 226 - Montana, Billings | 254 - Virginia, Arlington |
| 227 - Montana, Havre | 266 - Washington, Seattle |
| 229 - Nevada, Las Vegas | 256 - Washington, Spokane |

Citizenship and Residency Requirement: Applicants must be a U.S. citizen. Applicants must have, for three of the last five years immediately prior to applying for the Border Patrol Agent position, a) resided in the U.S.; or b) worked for the U.S. Government as an employee overseas in a Federal or military capacity; or c) been a dependent of a U.S. Federal or military employee serving overseas.

Age Requirement: In accordance with Public Law 100-238, this position is covered under law enforcement retirement provisions, therefore candidates must be appointed before reaching their 37th birthday unless they presently serve or have previously served in a Federal civilian law-enforcement- retirement-covered position.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

APPLICANTS MUST

1. Be willing to meet with a Border Patrol oral interview panel and successfully pass the oral interview
2. Undergo an extensive background investigation
3. Submit to a physical examination
4. Bear initial travel and uniform costs (a \$480 uniform allowance is provided after entrance on duty)
5. Accept appointments at any location on or near the Mexican border
6. Undergo intensive physical and academic training, which includes an approximate 5 month course of study at the Border Patrol Academy, and subsequent training throughout the fiscal year
7. Learn the Spanish language
8. Work rotating shifts, primarily at night
9. Work long and irregular hours, including weekends and holidays
10. Work alone
11. Adhere to grooming and dress standards
12. Carry, maintain, and use a firearm
13. Work under hazardous conditions such as inclement weather, rough terrain, heights, moving trains, high-speed chases, and armed encounters
14. Operate a variety of motor vehicles
15. Fly as a passenger/observer in various types of aircraft
16. Maintain composure and self-control under extremely stressful conditions
17. Work on operational details away from home for extended periods of 35 days or more

Medical Examination: BPA applicants must be physically able to perform strenuous duties, under rigorous environmental conditions. Duties require physical stamina in running long distances, climbing, jumping, etc., withstanding exposure to extreme weather conditions for extended periods; and standing/stooping for long periods of time. Irregular and protracted hours of work are also required. Prior to an offer of employment, applicants must undergo a pre-employment medical examination and be medically suitable to perform the full range of duties of the position efficiently and without hazard to you or others. Binocular vision is required. Uncorrected vision must test 20/100 or better in each eye. Any disease or condition that interferes with the safe, efficient and expected performance of the job duties or required training may constitute grounds for medical disqualification. Individualized assessments of each person's medical history, current condition and medical qualifications will be made on a case-by-case basis. Final consideration and medical determination may require additional information and/or testing. If medical information is required beyond the pre-placement examination, it must be provided at the applicant's expense in order to continue in the pre-appointment process.

If you have a touch-tone telephone and have access to a fax machine, you can request to have a summary of the BPA medical qualification requirements (5 pages) or the performance requirements related to academy training (Practical Exercise Performance Requirements – PEPRs) for the BPA position (7 pages) faxed to you via the INSFAX, a 24-hour faxback system. Call INSFAX at 612-727-5290 and request document 41103 (medical requirements) or document 41110 (training requirements/PEPRs for BPA position). You may also call the BPA Information Line (1-800-238-1945) and leave a message asking to have the summary of BPA medical requirements or the PEPRs for the BPA position mailed to you.

Drug Testing: All applicants for this position will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for illegal drug use prior to appointment. This position is designated for testing for illegal drug use; incumbents are subject to random testing.

Security Investigation: Appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of the Department of Justice security/suitability requirements, which include but are not limited to a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) name and fingerprint check and a background investigation. As part of the background investigation you will be asked to submit a security questionnaire (SF-86). The questionnaire will ask questions regarding education, residences, past and current employers, police records, financial situation, drug and alcohol usage, etc. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will conduct the investigation, which will consist of, among other things, a personal interview, a check for past arrest records, a credit check, and interviews of employers and personal references.

Firearms Disability Law: If you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, it is a felony for you to possess any firearm or ammunition. A misdemeanor crime of domestic violence is defined as any offense, which has as an element the use or attempted use of physical force or the threatened use of a deadly weapon, committed by a current or former domestic partner, parent, or guardian of the victim. The term "convicted" does not include anyone whose conviction has been expunged or set aside or who has received a pardon. As a condition of employment, individuals selected for Border Patrol Agent positions are required to carry weapons and ammunition as part of their official duties. Therefore, an individual with a conviction of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence may not be employed in a Border Patrol Agent position.

Training: Soon after entering on duty, Border Patrol Agent trainees are detailed to the Border Patrol Academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) near Brunswick, Georgia, or in Charleston, South Carolina, for approximately 5 months of intensive instruction in immigration and nationality laws, Spanish, physical training, marksmanship, and other courses. Failure to successfully complete any part of the basic training program including Spanish and intensive physical training will result in termination of employment. Post-Academy training will continue to prepare trainees for the probationary examinations administered at 6-1/2 and 10 months after entry on duty. Each trainee must successfully complete a 1-year probationary period.

Selective Service Registration: Male applicants born in 1960 or later will be required to complete a Statement for Selective Service Registration.

Driver's License: Candidates must possess a valid state driver's license at the time for appointment.

Note: All employees appointed under this announcement will be assigned to the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for organizational and administrative purposes regardless of where in DHS the function and mission of the position is being performed. This position is subject to reassignment throughout DHS as permanent placements are determined.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:

Geographic Preference: During the registration process for the written test, candidates will be asked to enter one geographic location code where they would like to be considered for employment. The codes are:

- 991 South Texas - includes the Laredo Border Patrol Sector and the McAllen Border Patrol Sector
- 992 West Texas/New Mexico - includes the Del Rio Border Patrol Sector, El Paso Border Patrol Sector, and the Marfa Border Patrol Sector
- 993 California - includes the El Centro Border Patrol Sector and the San Diego Border Patrol Sector
- 994 Arizona - includes the Tucson Border Patrol Sector and the Yuma Border Patrol Sector

Travel To Initial Duty Location: Selectees are required to pay all relocation expenses to the initial duty location. Travel expenses for training will be at agency expense.

Uniform Allowance: Border Patrol Agents are required to wear a uniform and will receive a uniform allowance.

Firearms: Firearms proficiency is required for Border Patrol Agents and is part of the training provided.

Promotion Potential: This position has promotion potential to the GS-11 level.

Benefits: There are excellent programs covering health insurance, life insurance, retirement, thrift savings plan, and holiday and leave benefits, for more information go to www.usajobs.opm.gov, select 'Federal Employment Benefits'.

Proof of Veteran's Preference: Applicants claiming veterans preference will be required to provide proof of preference after obtaining and receiving a passing score (70) and a Notice of Results (NOR). Applicants who are still on active duty and therefore cannot obtain a DD Form 214 can provide a statement of active service dates and a list of medals and awards they have received in lieu of their DD Form 214. To find out if you are preference eligible, we suggest you go to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) web-site <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov> for more information. **More information on proof of Veteran's Preference will be provided on the Notice of Results (NOR).** If you have a touch-tone telephone and have access to a fax machine, you can request to have a veterans' preference fact sheet faxed to you via the INSFAX, a 24-hour faxback system. Call INSFAX at 612-727-5290 and request document 40044.

Reasonable Accommodation: The Department of Homeland Security provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the hiring personnel office. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

Summary of the Hiring Process:

- Register for the written test during the open period by one of two ways: online via the Internet or via the telephone by the TAPS (Telephone Application Processing System).
- Take and pass the test with a score of at least 70 or higher.
- Be placed on the register in score order for future referral for a geographical area to the Border Patrol.
- When your score is reached for referral for an area, you will be sent a tentative selection letter and pre-appointment forms to complete and return by a given deadline. Before an entrance-on-duty date is established, you will need to satisfactorily complete an oral interview, a medical and vision examination, a drug test and a background investigation.

To hear pre-recorded information on the Border Patrol Agent position, please call 1-800-238-1945.

The Department of Homeland Security is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All candidates will receive consideration without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, lawful political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership, handicap, or other non-merit factors.

INFORMATION REGARDING DISPLACED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES REQUESTING SPECIAL SELECTION PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

If you are a displaced Federal Employee you may be entitled to receive special priority selection under the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP). To receive this priority consideration, you must:

1. Be a displaced Federal employee. You must submit a copy of the appropriate documentation such as a RIF separation notice, a letter from OPM or your agency documenting your priority consideration status with your application package. ICTAP eligibility expires one year after separation. The following categories of candidates are considered displaced employees. (A.1-6 or B):
 - A. Current or former career or career-conditional (tenure group I or II) competitive service employees who:
 1. Received a specific RIF separation notice; **or**
 2. Separated because of a compensable injury, whose compensation has been terminated, and whose former agency certifies that it is unable to place; **or**
 3. Retired with a disability and whose disability annuity has been or is being terminated; **or**
 4. Upon receipt of a RIF separation notice retired on the effective date of the RIF and submits a Standard Form 50 that indicates "Retirement in lieu of RIF;" **or**
 5. Retired under the discontinued service retirement option; **or**
 6. Was separated because he/she declined a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another commuting area.
 - OR**
 - B. Former Military Reserve or National Guard Technicians who are receiving a special Office of Personnel Management (OPM) disability retirement annuity under section 8337(h) or 8456 or title 5 United States Code.
2. Be applying for a position at or below the grade level of the position from which you have been separated. The position must not have a greater promotion potential than the position from which you were separated. This means that since the BPA is a GS-11 position at its full performance level (FPL), the position you were separated from must be a GS-11 or higher grade at its FPL and you must indicate the FPL of your separated position on your application.
3. Have a current (or last) performance rating of record of a least fully successful or equivalent. This must be submitted with your application package. *(This requirement does not apply to candidates who are eligible due to compensable injury or disability retirement.)*
4. Occupy or be displaced from a position in the same local commuting area of the position for which you are requesting priority consideration.
5. File your application by the vacancy announcement closing date and meet all the application criteria (e.g., submit all required documentation, etc.)
6. Be rated well qualified for the position. Candidates passing the Border Patrol Agent written test who attain a rating of 85, exclusive of veterans preference points, are considered to be well qualified, subject to meeting the qualifications, medical, age, and suitability requirements and passing an oral interview.